

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 153 683

JC 780 238

TITLE Validation Study on the Classification of
Non-Curricular Students, Fall 1976.

INSTITUTION Virginia State Dept. of Community Colleges,
Richmond.

PUB DATE Apr 77

NOTE 17p.

EDRS PRICE MF-\$0.83 HC-\$1.67 Plus Postage.

DESCRIPTORS Academic Aspiration; *Classification; *College
Majors; Community Colleges; Educational Objectives;
Enrollment; *Junior Colleges; *Junior College
Students; School Registration; *State Surveys;
Validity

IDENTIFIERS *Noncurricular Students; *Student Objectives;
Virginia Community College System

ABSTRACT

A study of the Virginia Community College System's Non-Curricular Classification System, which classifies students not enrolled in a particular educational program by ten goal categories, was conducted to assess the validity of classifying non-curricular students by their educational goals, to determine whether students agreed or disagreed with their classifications, and to ascertain the non-curricular goals or curricular programs of students classified incorrectly. A total of 3,729 non-curricular students, of 5,448 randomly selected from non-curricular students in all 23 Virginia colleges, answered a survey instrument displaying their personal registration data. Findings indicated: 83.5% were correctly classified; of the 17.5% incorrectly registered, 11.4% chose another non-curricular classification, and 4.9% chose a curricular or developmental studies program classification; nearly 93% of "non-degree transfer" students and 91.4% of students classified as "upgrading employment skills for current jobs" agreed with their classification; those recorded as "high school students taking college courses" were most frequently correctly identified; and students who registered the lowest accuracy percentages were classified "general or curricular requirements pending", "career exploration", and "restricted enrollment". (TR)

* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *

ED153683

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS
MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Elmo Roesler

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND
USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRO-
DUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM
THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGIN-
ATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS
STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT
OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

VALIDATION STUDY ON THE CLASSIFICATION
OF
NON-CURRICULAR STUDENTS
FALL 1976

Institutional Studies and Reports Office

Virginia Community College System
P. O. Box 1558
Richmond, Virginia 23212

April 1977

JC 780 238

Table of Contents

<u>Section</u>	<u>Page</u>
Introduction	1
Purpose	2
Methodology	2
Findings	3
Conclusion	4
Study's Aftermath	4
Appendices	
A. Non-Curricular Classification Form	
B. Survey Instrument With the Attachment	
C. Number of Non-Curricular Students and Sample Sizes	
D. Number of Usable Returns From the College	

INTRODUCTION

Prior to fall 1976, students in the Virginia Community College System (VCCS), who were not enrolled in a curriculum or developmental studies programs, were classified as "unclassified students."¹ The VCCS Policy Manual indicated that the unclassified category included part-time students auditing a course or taking courses without enrolling in an educational program, students fulfilling requirements prior to enrolling in a program, and high school students taking college courses. As a result of this classification system, a significant proportion of students enrolled in VCCS were designated as unclassified students.

In 1974, studies were conducted on the student classification system to assess the accuracy of the student registration data.² The results of the studies indicated wide variation between VCCS curricular designations and the students' expressed educational choices. In addition, the studies expressed concerns about the lack of specificity in the Student Classification System, since it did not describe unclassified students by their educational objectives.

As a result of these studies, a VCCS task group was convened (1) to develop for unclassified students a set of non-curricular categories with accompanying educational goal statements and data processing codes and (2) to design a procedure to have non-curricular students select appropriate goal oriented classifications when they register in the community colleges. In the document *A Proposal for an Expanded VCCS Classification System*, the task group members identified ten non-curricular student categories, and they recommended ways whereby the VCCS could modify its policy statements on student classification and change its student registration procedures in order to implement the new non-curricular student classifications. This *Proposal* also conveyed the charge that after fall 1976 registration, a procedure would be used to assess the validity of the classification system for non-curricular students. This validation study, therefore, follows through on the *Proposal's* recommended audit of the classification system.

The VCCS Non-Curricular Classification System was first implemented by the Virginia community colleges during fall, 1976 registration. Figure 1 lists the ten non-curricular categories with corresponding educational goal statements and data processing codes. See Appendix A for the Non-Curricular Classification Form suggested for college use during student registration.

There follows sections on the study's purpose, methodology, findings, conclusions, and discussion.

¹The term "unclassified student" is a designation developed and implemented to by the State Council for Higher Education in Virginia (SCHEV) to apply to students who are not enrolled in programs which are categorized as Foundation, Occupational-Technical, Bachelor's Credit, First Professional, and Graduate.

²A review of VCCS policies and practices was conducted by the Joint Legislative and Audit Review Commission (JLARC) in addition to data analyses by VCCS personnel.

FIGURE 1

NON-CURRICULAR STUDENTS CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

<u>Code</u>	<u>Educational Goals</u>	<u>Code</u>	<u>Educational Goals</u>
021	<i>Upgrading Employment Skills for Current Job</i> Student is employed and seeking to upgrade skills for current job.	026	<i>Non-degree Transfer Student</i> Student is enrolled at a community college with the intent to transfer to another college.
022	<i>Developing Skills for New Job</i> Student is seeking to develop skills for a new job.	027	<i>High School Student (with college approval only)</i> High school student, with permission of principal, is enrolled at a community college.
023	<i>Career Exploration</i> Student is undecided about a career goal and an occupational choice.	028	<i>General or Curricular Requirements Pending (with college approval only)</i> Student who has not met all general or specific admission requirements as stated in the college catalog.
024	<i>General Knowledge and Personal Satisfaction</i> Student is enrolled for reasons not related to specific occupational or educational goals.	029	<i>Restricted Enrollment (with college approval only)</i> Student has met admission requirements of a specific curriculum but is temporarily denied entry because of enrollment limit.
025	<i>Transient Student</i> Student, while enrolled at a community college, maintains primary enrollment with another post-secondary institution.	030	<i>Auditing a Course (with college approval only)</i> Student enrolls in a course without taking the exams or receiving credit.

PURPOSE

The validation study on the classification of non-curricular students was conducted during the last weeks of 1976. The study was designed to achieve the following objectives:

1. To assess the validity of classifying all non-curricular students by their educational goals.
2. To determine the extent to which non-curricular students coded 021-030 during fall 1976 registration subsequently agreed or disagreed with their classifications.
3. To determine the non-curricular goals or curricular programs of students who indicated that they were classified incorrectly during fall 1976 registration.

The study did not attempt to identify reasons why students were classified inaccurately by the colleges.

METHODOLOGY

The validation study included the phases: developing the survey design, identifying the study population, administering the survey, and reporting the study results.

A two-part survey form was designed. See Appendix P. The first part of the form explained the survey's purpose to students. The second part contained a label displaying students' individual registration data, including his/her name and address, social security number, and the non-curricular classification code with the appropriate educational goal statement. The student was then asked to answer the following question:

Was the classification recorded on the label correct at the time of your fall 1976 registration?

An affirmative ("yes") response validated the student's classification. The student who responded negatively ("no") to the question was asked to identify for fall, 1976, the code of his/her correct classification from a list of the college's non-curricular goals and educational programs. Students were not asked any other questions.

Survey Population

The validation study sample population was drawn randomly from the list of non-curricular students who registered at the twenty-three Virginia community colleges during the fall quarter, 1976. The sample size from each college was based on the number of non-curricular students registered at the college. All samples were selected to meet a predetermined 95% confidence level. A total of 5,448 non-curricular students were identified as the survey population. Appendix C contains the number of non-curricular students and the sample size for all colleges.

Administering the Survey

The survey was administered by the Research and Evaluation Section of the Virginia Department of Community Colleges. The sample population received the initial mailing which consisted of the survey form with the attachment and return envelope. Six days later, a follow-up postcard was mailed as a reminder to non-respondents. A week after the postcard went out, the materials in the original survey packet were again sent to the remaining non-respondents. A cut-off date for using returned survey forms was set at six weeks after the first mailing. Usable survey forms were received from 3,729 students -- a 68 percent return. This is a highly satisfactory rate-of-return for a student survey. Appendix D contains the number of usable returns from each college.

FINDINGS

This section describes the results of the survey of non-curricular students for the Virginia Community College System. Findings are reported on the basis of the total number of usable returns. Although the samples were selected for 95 percent confidence level, the number of usable returns (3,729) lowered the confidence level to 93 percent. Table I presents the extent of changes in non-curricular classifications as indicated by the students in the survey. The major findings are as follows:

1. Overall, 83.5 percent of the students indicated that their recorded non-curricular classification at the time of fall, 1976 registration was correct.
2. Out of the 17.5 percent who indicated that their recorded non-curricular classification was inaccurate, 11.4 percent chose another non-curricular classification, and 4.9 percent chose curricular or the developmental study program to describe their fall, 1976 classifications.
3. Nearly 93 percent of *Non-degree Transfer Students* (code 026) and 91.4 percent of students classified as *Upgrading Employment Skills for Current Job* (code 021) agreed with their fall 1976 non-curricular classification. Among all non-curricular categories, students who were classified as a *High School Student* (code 027) Taking College Courses agreed with their classification, the most -- 94.8 percent.
4. For three non-curricular codes, students recorded the lowest percentages for the accuracy of fall, 1976 classifications. The lowest classification accuracy was observed for the non-curricular categories *General or Curricular Requirements Pending* (028), 67.6 percent; *Career Exploration* (023), 71.5 percent; and *Restricted Enrollment* (029), 77.3 percent.

TABLE I

VALIDATION STUDY NON-CURRICULAR CLASSIFICATION, FALL, 1976
 CHANGE IN NON-CURRICULAR CLASSIFICATION
 VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

	Non-Curricular Student Categories	Number of Returns	No Change in Non-Curricular Status		Change Within Non-Curricular Classification		Change To Curricular/ Developmental Studies	
			<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
021	Upgrading Employment Skills for Current Job	995	910	91.4%	66	6.6%	19	1.9%
022	Developing Skills for New Job	420	348	82.8%	58	13.8%	14	3.3%
023	Career Exploration	260	186	71.5%	33	12.6%	41	15.7%
024	General Knowledge and Personal Satisfaction	1344	1087	80.8%	200	14.8%	57	4.2%
025	Transient Student	103	87	84.4%	14	13.5%	2	1.9%
026	Non-degree Transfer Student	139	129	92.8%	6	4.3%	4	2.8%
027	High School Student (college approval)	136	129	94.8%	6	4.4%	1	0.7%
028	General or Curricular Requirements Pending (college approval)	229	155	67.6%	35	15.2%	39	17.0%
029	Restricted Enrollment (college approval)	53	41	77.3%	3	5.6%	9	16.9%
030	Auditing a Course (college approval)	50	44	88.0%	6	12.0%	0	0.0%
		3729	3116	83.5%	427	11.4%	186	4.9%

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the large proportion (83.5%) of the students who agreed with their recorded classification, it is concluded that the non-curricular classification system introduced in the VCCS in fall, 1976 did accurately classify non-curricular students by their educational goals. In addition, the results of the survey validates the assumption that it is possible to classify all non-curricular students by their educational goals.

Of the students who indicated that their recorded non-curricular classification was inaccurate, only about 5 percent chose a curricular or developmental study code to indicate their correct classification. This indicates that a very small proportion of non-curricular students should have been classified in a curricular or developmental study program.

The study supports the fact that non-curricular students subscribed to definite educational goals by enrolling in the community colleges for the purposes of developing skills for current and new jobs, exploring a career, and obtaining general knowledge for personal satisfaction. The study also indicated that non-curricular (formerly unclassified) students can be classified accurately within the non-curricular classification system. These students are generally considered in higher education to be "non-traditional students."

STUDY'S AFTERMATH

This report has presented the results and the conclusions of the validation study on Non-Curricular Student Classification System conducted during fall 1976. The report does not contain results and conclusion for individual colleges, nor does it discuss other detailed analyses.

Because of the limited scope of the research design of the study, no attempt was made to identify reasons for inaccurate classification. As a follow-up to this study, other research topics seem especially worth noting here:

1. Why did 16 to 17 percent of the students enrolled in non-curricular categories *Career Exploration* (023), *General or Curricular Requirement Pending* (028), and *Restricted Enrollment* (028) indicate that a curricular or developmental program was their correct classification during fall 1976 registration?
2. How accurate are the classification data on the students enrolled in the curricular and developmental study programs?
3. To what extent do registration procedures and practices effect the accuracy of the colleges student registration data?

We believe this report has presented an overview the Non-Curricular Classification System, the rationale for the validation study, and important findings of the study.

APPENDICES

NON-CURRICULAR CLASSIFICATION FORM

NAME (Last, First, Middle I.) SOC. SEC. NO. DATE OF ENROLLMENT

Instructions for Student Use-- Each student is required to enroll in a regular curriculum, the developmental program, or one of the nine non-curricular categories listed below. This form is to be completed by each student who is not enrolled in a regular curriculum or the developmental program.

0		
---	--	--

Please show your primary goal for attending the community college by selecting one of the ten descriptions below. Show your response by writing the proper number 021 thru 030 in the box on the left.

Educational Goals

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>021 <u>Upgrading Employment Skills for Present Job</u> -- Student is employed and seeking to upgrade skills for current job. <u>EXAMPLE:</u></p> <p>A data processing employee learning a new computer program language.</p> | <p>026 <u>Non-degree Transfer Student</u> -- Student is enrolled at a community college with the intent to transfer to another post-secondary institution prior to completing the graduation requirements of the community college.</p> |
| <p>022 <u>Developing Skills for a New Job</u> -- Student is seeking to develop skills for a new job. <u>EXAMPLE:</u></p> <p>A person desires to acquire data processing skills for a new job in a computer center.</p> | <p>027 <u>High School Student</u> (with college approval only) -- High school student, with permission of principal, is enrolled at a community college.</p> |
| <p>023 <u>Career Exploration</u> -- Student is undecided about a career goal and an occupational choice. The college will make available counseling assistance to aid the student in making decisions concerning career/curricular goals. Such a student will be expected to declare another educational objective prior to completing 45 credit hours of course work.</p> | <p>028 <u>General or Curricular Requirements Pending</u> (with college approval only) -- Student who has not met all general or specific admission requirements as stated in the college catalog. The student should be enrolled in this category for one quarter only.</p> |
| <p>024 <u>General Knowledge and Personal Satisfaction</u> -- Student is enrolled for reasons not related to specific occupational or educational goals.</p> | <p>029 <u>Restricted Enrollment</u> (with college approval only) -- Student has met admission requirements of a specific curriculum but is temporarily denied entry because of enrollment limit. The student is enrolled in other courses while waiting for entry in a chosen curriculum.</p> |
| <p>025 <u>Transient Student</u> -- Student, while enrolled at a community college, maintains primary enrollment with another post-secondary institution. <u>EXAMPLE:</u></p> <p>A student primarily enrolled at Roanoke Memorial Hospital also enrolls for chemistry courses at Virginia Western Community College.</p> | <p>030 <u>Auditing a Course</u> (with college approval only) -- Student enrolls in a course without taking the exams or receiving credit, by registering and paying regular tuition.</p> |



VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

7 NORTH ST. STREET, P.O. BOX 1555, RICHMOND, VIRGINIA 23212, AREA CODE 804/786-2221

FALL 1976

Dear Student:

The Virginia Community College System is checking the accuracy of your student classification for fall 1976 registration. We need information only to check the accuracy of student classification data. Your present classification will remain the same until you re-register.

Please complete and return this survey form to us within three days, using the enclosed pre-addressed and stamped envelope.

Thanks for your help.

Very truly yours,

Fred A. Snyder, Director
Research and Planning Division
Virginia Department of Community Colleges

SURVEY FORM

The following personal data is on file for you.

NAME:	JOHN DOE	VCCS
ADDRESS:	100 MAIN STREET	
CITY AND ZIP:	ANYTOWN, VA.	23000

S.S. NO.: 999-99-9999

STUDENT CLASSIFICATION: DEVELOP JOB SKILLS 022

STUDENT IS SEEKING TO DEVELOP SKILLS FOR A
NEW JOB.

Please answer the following question.

Was the classification recorded on the label above correct at the time of your fall 1976 registration?

☐ YES If you checked this box, you have completed the survey. Please return the questionnaire in the envelope.

☐ NO If you checked this box, please answer the question below.

You have checked that your classification was wrong. The yellow sheet shows student classifications at your college. Look at the classifications and choose the code that best described your goal or program during fall 1976 registration. Write the code number in the box below.

--	--	--

Code

You have completed the survey. Please return the questionnaire in the enclosed envelope.

CENTRAL VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE
STUDENT CLASSIFICATIONS

Attachment

Instructions for Student Use

If you checked that your classification was wrong, please look at the classifications on this page. Choose the code that best described your goal or program during fall 1976 registration. Write that code on the survey form.

NON-CURRICULAR GOALS

Code	Educational Goal	Code	Educational Goal
021	<i>Upgrading Employment Skills for Current Job</i> Student is employed and seeking to upgrade skills for current job.	026	<i>Non-degree Transfer Student</i> Student is enrolled at a community college with the intent to transfer to another college.
022	<i>Developing Skills for New Job</i> Student is seeking to develop skills for a new job.	027	<i>High School Student (with college approval only)</i> High school student, with permission of principal, is enrolled at a community college.
023	<i>Career Exploration</i> Student is undecided about a career goal and an occupational choice.	028	<i>General or Curricular Requirements Pending (with college approval only)</i> Student who has not met all general or specific admission requirements as stated in the college catalog.
024	<i>General Knowledge and Personal Satisfaction</i> Student is enrolled for reasons not related to specific occupational or educational goals.	029	<i>Restricted Enrollment (with college approval only)</i> Student has met admission requirements of a specific curriculum but is temporarily denied entry because of enrollment limit.
025	<i>Transient Student</i> Student, while enrolled at a community college, maintains primary enrollment with another post-secondary institution.	030	<i>Auditing a Course (with college approval only)</i> Student enrolls in a course without taking the exam or receiving credit.

DEVELOPMENTAL STUDIES

Code	Program	Code	Program
002	<i>Developmental Studies</i>		

TWO-YEAR COLLEGE TRANSFER PROGRAMS

648	<i>Liberal Arts</i>	213	<i>Business Administration</i>
625	<i>Education</i>	831	<i>Engineering</i>
699	<i>General Studies</i>	880	<i>Science</i>

TWO-YEAR OCCUPATIONAL/TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

203	<i>Accounting</i>	211	<i>Banking and Finance</i>
915	<i>Civil</i>	513	<i>Commercial Art</i>
209	<i>Data Processing</i>	921	<i>Drafting and Design</i>
941	<i>Electrical/Electronics</i>	427	<i>Fire Science</i>
212	<i>Management</i>	151	<i>Medical Laboratory</i>
152	<i>Medical Records</i>	956	<i>Mechanical</i>
252	<i>Merchandising</i>	931	<i>Nuclear</i>
464	<i>Police Science</i>	172	<i>Radiology</i>
276	<i>Secretarial Science</i>		

NON-DEGREE OCCUPATIONAL/TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

902	<i>Automotive Mechanics</i>	204	<i>Bookkeeping</i>
220	<i>Business and Industrial Supervision</i>	634	<i>Child Care</i>
210	<i>Computer Operation</i>	215	<i>Data Processing (Auxiliary Equipment Operator)</i>
278	<i>Educational Secretary</i>	942	<i>Electricity</i>
918	<i>Electronics Servicing</i>	428	<i>Firefighting and Prevention</i>
216	<i>General Clerical</i>	463	<i>Law Enforcement</i>
957	<i>Machine Operations</i>	959	<i>Machine Shop</i>
960	<i>Machine Tool</i>	182	<i>Respiratory Therapy Technician</i>
629	<i>Teacher Aid</i>	281	<i>Transportation</i>
279	<i>Typist</i>	995	<i>Welding</i>

NUMBER OF NON-CURRICULAR STUDENTS AND SAMPLE SIZES

FALL 1976

<u>College</u>	<u>Number of Non-Curricular Students</u>	<u>Sample Size</u>
Blue Ridge	755	262
Central Virginia	701	255
Dabney S. Lancaster	221	142
Danville	663	249
Eastern Shore	286	167
Germanna	184	126
J. Sargeant Reynolds	3,204	355
John Tyler	1,042	289
Lord Fairfax	555	232
Mountain Empire	491	221
New River	505	223
Northern Virginia	17,577	391
Patrick Henry	163	115
Paul D. Camp	308	174
Piedmont Virginia	856	272
Rappahannock	680	252
Southside Virginia	387	197
Southwest Virginia	175	122
Thomas Nelson	1,161	298
Tidewater	3,710	361
Virginia Highlands	351	187
Virginia Western	1,627	321
Wytheville	575	236
Total	36,177	5,448

NUMBER OF USABLE RETURNS FROM THE COLLEGES

<u>College</u>	<u>Number of Usable Returns</u>
Blue Ridge	220
Central Virginia	181
Dabney S. Lancaster	71
Danville	214
Eastern Shore	153
Germanna	110
J. Sargeant Reynolds	149
John Tyler	206
Lord Fairfax	38
Mountain Empire	167
New River	186
Northern Virginia	207
Patrick Henry	74
Paul D. Camp	121
Piedmont Virginia	192
Rappahannock	193
Southside Virginia	138
Southwest Virginia	68
Thomas Nelson	139
Tidewater	211
Virginia Highlands	168
Virginia Western	243
Wytheville	207
Total	3,729

UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
LOS ANGELES

JUN 23 1978

CLEARINGHOUSE FOR
JUNIOR COLLEGES